space, in excess of Schedule of Accommodation, in Postal buildings on a leave and license basis to Central/State Government, Central/State Government PSUs, Nationalized and Foreign Banks of repute, National and International Financial Institutions of repute and Companies or Corporate bodies of repute. In pursuance of the policy, excess space available in three Posts Offices has already been sublet for use of ATMs by Banks.

Extra Postal Services

1832. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Postal Department is undertaking extra-postal services like accepting Income Tax return, Passport applications, etc;

(b) if so, the details of such services undertaken by the Department;

(c) whether the Department is equipped with sufficient employees for undertaking such extra-departmental services; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Department of Posts has the largest Postal Network in the world with 1,55,516 post offices of which 89% are in the rural areas. Department of Posts is leveraging its network to offer services like acceptance of payment of utility bills, sale of application forms relating to various examinations, acceptance of loan applications on behalf of financial institutions, acceptance of Income tax and Service Tax returns etc.

(b) and (d) Such additional services are taken up by the Department of Posts with the objective of optimal utilization of existing manpower and infrastructure, which is adequate for the purpose and generation of additional revenue for the Government.